



NATSILS

National Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander Legal Services

TRUE JUSTICE FOR OUR PEOPLE

MEDIA RELEASE

National trend of policies to lock up kids will destroy lives and increase crime

31 March 2025

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (NATSILS) says a frightening national trend of governments deciding to lock up children will destroy lives and make communities more dangerous.

Karly Warner, Chair of NATSILS says, “We are seeing more and more state and territory governments prioritising looking tough rather than implementing evidence-based policy that will make communities safer.

“These laws are not only dangerous – they will backfire and compound the disadvantage and trauma experienced by too many of our young people and communities.

“How many lives will be destroyed before Premiers and Chief Ministers across the country realise that locking up children has never worked anywhere?

“We are pleading with all state and territory governments to listen to the experts – organisations that work on the ground with our communities will be the first to tell you that throwing more children in prison will make communities more dangerous.

“Investment in community-led supports and services that prevent children from interacting with the criminal justice system in the first place is the best way to strengthen our communities and keep them safe.

“Locking kids up is an express ticket to a life of crime and suffering. We know throwing a child in prison makes them more likely to become trapped in an ongoing cycle of crime and imprisonment, which only harms our communities.

“The refusal of governments to listen to the evidence shows there is a profound lack of understanding of the issues Australian communities face at the highest levels of government.

“State and territory governments across the country need to re-think what outcomes they want for their constituents – the decisions you make will have lasting impacts for generations to come,” says Ms Warner.

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